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ABSTRACT

Defining general semantics as the study of words or symbols and their effects on human behavior, this paper proposes a general semantics approach to the teaching of style in college introductory speech courses. The paper cites results of a 1980 survey of basic speech course content and emphases, showing that while most courses devote a great deal of time to the topic of language, they do not often state or define the term "general semantics," or indicate its relationship to style in public speaking. The paper then examines the term "style," which is concerned with proper wording to achieve a desired effect, and "general semantics" to show how the first is a tool of communication while the latter is a means of assessing the effectiveness of that tool. The major portion of the paper contains a proposal for a public speaking unit that identifies principles of style and suggests ways teachers can relate them to general semantics. In addition to definitions, the paper offers examples and illustrations of each principle, including (1) simplicity and concreteness, (2) appropriateness, (3) imagery and vividness, and (4) accuracy. Two detailed examples illustrating the use of imagery in public speaking are appended. (HTH)

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A PAPER PRESENTED

TO

TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENERAL SEMANTICS

August 16-18, 1985

University of California
San Diego, California

TOPIC: LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURE

TITLE: STYLE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING: A GENERAL SEMANTICS APPROACH

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STYLE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING: A GENERAL SEMANTICS APPROACH

AN ABSTRACT OF A PAPER PRESENTED TO

Tenth International Conference on General Semantics
August 16-18, 1985-University of California, San Diego
Presenter-Dr. Tom H. Willett, Department of Communication and Public Relations
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The public speaking approach is one of the most frequently emphasized orientations in courses of introductory speech communication. Within the introductory course is often the component of style, effective wording, in public speaking while the actual subject labelled general semantics or semantics is not often discussed. Because of (1) constraints of time and (2) often the number of components covered in a given period of time the author advocates that the principles of style and the principles of general semantics be effectively integrated into the public speaking approach. The conceptual relationship between general semantics and style is defined along with illustrations of this relationship. Teachers and practitioners of public speaking will find the description of general semantics and effective style particularly pragmatic; in addition, this paper will present helpful examples and illustrations.

> Talking and eloquence are not the same; to speak and to speak well are two things.
>
> -Ben Jonson-

> How a person speaks privately or in public provides the quickest and surest insight in his intelligence and personality. Thought, diction, and the skill of expression are X-rays of intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom. How else is a civilized man to be judged?
>
> (Louis Nizer, Reflections Without Mirrors, p. 127)

INTRODUCTION

From 16th century English writer-critic Ben Jonson to celebrated contemporary lawyer Louis Nizer the skill of expression is given preeminence. The practioner's ability to work with words is highly valued both professionally and personally. To manage effectively our language means we have the ability to gain command of our experiences and to share those experiences. The purpose of this paper is to explore the teaching of style in courses of public speaking through a general semantics approach. The exploration focuses (1) on several presumptions and observations, (2) on the explication of principles of style and interrelation to general semantics and (3) on several concluding thoughts and challenges for practioners of the spoken word.

OBSERVATIONS

Several assumptions must be made. First, university introductory speech communication courses frequently emphasize a public speaking component. Second, within the introductory courses at least a brief discussion of general semantics and of style can and should be presented. Third, conceptually style and general semantics are closely related.

The Basic Course

Many colleges and universities have, as an elective or a requirement for graduation, a basic speech communication course. Several surveys conclude that the basic course is widely offered in institutions of higher education (Gibson, Gruner, et al, 1980). After surveying 552 schools 91.6% reported using strictly a public speaking approach or using that approach in combination with interpersonal and group communication. The public speaking orientation is indeed often used in the basic speech course.

The basics course devotes significant time to the topic of language. Of the 20 potential topics covered in a basic course "language" ranks 7th in a tie with the topic of speech anxiety. Topics of informative speaking and persuasive speaking rank one and two respectively with manuscript speaking and parliamentary speaking ranked 19th and 20th. The language unit, with a computed ranking by this writer of 7th out of 20, indicates emphasis well above the average (Gibson, Gruner, et al, p. 3, Table 3).

The 1980 survey suggests that the lack of time to cover course objectives constitutes a major problem. Of the 18 reported problems the lack of time ranks 4th according to the number of schools reporting. Instructors apparently demonstrate concern about the number of units covered in the basic course and the time available in the course (Gibson, Gruner, et al, p. 8, Table 8). Realizing that (1) public speaking is an orientation in the basic course (2) language is an integral unit in the public speaking approach and (3) teachers are already concerned about the lack of time in the course, it is imperative that units involving significant amounts of time not be added to the course. A survey by this writer of leading textbooks for the public speaking oriented basic course indicates that the term, general semantics and semantics are not used. There exists, however, cursory explanations of a

few of the tenets of general semantics, e.g., meanings are in people not words, etc. There seldom exist attempts to actually state, define and relate the term general semantics to the point of discussion. Our association should advocate a more deliberate integration by label and definition the term general semantics with the presentation of style in public speaking. Certainly other junctures exist for integrating general semantics; however, the unit on style appears feasible.

Style and General Semantics

The term "style" or "language" in this paper means the characteristic manner that a communicator works with words. As Miller and Saracheck reported in Communication: General Semantics Perspectives, "An individual's style is that repertoire of attitudes and ways of behaving that he tends to use with particular frequency" (p. 306). While discussing the total range of effective style of business management the Miller and Sarachek definition is still relevant to the way individuals also manage their expression and the manner in which they work with words. An equally appropriate and perhaps more meaningful perspective of style in the context of working with words is provided by speech communication authors Nelson and Pearson when they quote Jonathan Swift, "Proper words in proper places make the true definition of style" (Nelson and Pearson, p. 137).

General semantics is a study of symbols and their affect(s) on human behavior. It is closely aligned with semantics which is a "study of human interaction through communication" (Hayakawa, ix). General semantics and the unit of style are closely related in theory and practice. Style is concerned with proper wording to achieve a proper effect while general semantics provides a framework for viewing the style and its effect. Style is a tool of communication while general semantics provides a means to assess the effect

of that tool in the process of communication. Communication in public speaking is a process of sharing experiences for the purpose of a "transfer of meaning" or accuracy (Fabun, p. 79). Style or "proper words in proper places" is a tool for achieving a transfer of that meaning. General semantics is a means for examining those "proper words in proper places" and for providing corrective thought or choice.

A comparative analysis of the characteristics of style and the goals of general semantics suggests a practical key to their interrelationship. Common among characteristics of style are simplicity or clarity, appropriateness, imagery or vividness and accuracy (Monroe and Ehrinnger, 1974; Reid, 1982; Logue, Freshley, et al, 1982). General semantics, a study of words or symbols and how they affect behavior, also concerns itself with the goal of communication, namely accuracy. Whenever style is an effective tool for achieving a correspondence of shared meanings or accuracy between speaker and listener, at that point also the rules of general semantics should be applied.

S. I. Hayakawa clearly identified those rules in Language In Thought and Action. Among the ten rules are: context determines meaning; words are not things or a map is not the territory it stands for and meanings of words are not in words, they are in us (pp. 280-281). These extensional devices for clarifying one's thoughts as well as accurately sharing those thoughts with another can be easily integrated into a unit on style. For example, the semantic rule that the context determines meaning can be related to the characteristic of appropriateness of wording. The stylistic characteristic of appropriateness is made effective only if the semantic principle of the context of the communication unit is analyzed.

Explanation, examples, and illustrations of the mutual interdependence between style or effective wording and the study of general semantics will be

presented. The illustrations are particularly useful for teachers of public speaking and those concerned about communicating effectively through oral public discourse. This explanation is not meant to be exhaustive but merely illustrative. An appendix of detailed examples is also provided. The explanation that follows focuses on several assumptions: (1) teachers of public speaking have the opportunity to more consciously integrate the study of general semantics into basic courses (2) general semantics is easily integrated while presenting the component of style and (3) the teachers' express concern for the lack of time to present already established units, units which do not include a direct tie by definition to semantics or general semantics. Because of these three factors and because of the assumed need to at least briefly integrate the concept of general semantics into the basic course the following modest proposal identifies principles of style in public speaking and suggests how a teacher or practitioner can relate those principles to general semantics.

A PROPOSAL

Style in Public Speaking: A General Semantics Approach

Observations

A. Opening quotations by Ben Jonson and Louis Nizer

> Talking and eloquence are not the same; to speak and to speak well are two things.
>
> -Ben Jonson-

> How a person speaks privately or in public provides the quickest and surest insight in his intelligence and personality. Thought, diction, and the skill of expression are X-rays of intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom. How else is a civilized man to be judged?
>
> (Louis Nizer, Reflections Without Mirrors, p. 127)

B. Definitions:

1. Communication

Primarily a conscious process of sharing experiences with the goal being a transfer of meaning or accuracy (see Don Fabun).

2. Semantics and General Semantics

"Semantics is the study of human interaction through communication" (Hayakawa, 4th edition, ix).

General semantics is a study of symbols or words and how they affect human behavior. It is the marriage between a linguist and a psychologist, between a person working with words and a person working with human behavior.

3. Style

Style is the characteristic manner of working with words.

As Jonathan Swift said, "Proper words in proper places make the true definition of style."

<u>Principles of Style in Public Speaking</u>

A. Simplicity/concreteness

Evidence:

1. I Corinthians 14:9

> Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. (NIV)

2. William Jennings Bryan often quoted I Corinthians 14:9 as key advice given to those interested in commanding experiences through the spoken word.

3. The antidote for ambiguity and confusion is simplicity and concreteness. Illustrative of the antidote is "And 55 Words To Tell This."

"Little Rock, Ark.--(AP)--An item which appeared recently in the Arkansas Statesman informed the public: 'The creation of the world is told in Genesis in 40 words. The Ten Commandments have 297 words, and the Declaration of Independence has 1,321 words. But a government pamphlet required 2,500 words to announce a reduction in the price of cabbage seed.'"

B. Appropriateness

Appropriateness is an attempt to balance in accurate proportion the psychological dimensions of word choice with probable impact.

Evidence:

1. Proverbs 25:11

   A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. (NIV)

2. A basic tenet of general semantics is "the meanings of words are not in words; they are in us" (Hayakawa, 4th edition, p. 280). What is "appropriate" word choice or the "proper word in the proper place" is inescapably linked to the study of general semantics.

3. Specific examples/illustrations of appropriateness are found in several selections. "Words don't mean, people mean," is vividly described in Selling of the President by Joe McGinniss. During the 1968 Presidential election a problem arose for the campaign staff of Mr. Nixon. Campaign workers Harry Treleaven, Len Garment and Gene Jones were forced to recall a television commercial aired by the three major networks. Thousands of dollars were spent to tape a commercial of an actual soldier in Vietnam. Mr. Nixon, through visual aids and voice over explained his position on Vietnam while a picture of the soldier was shown. Problems confronted the staff because of the principle, "words and symbols don't mean, people mean." The semantic difficulties became apparent.

> Another problem arose in the Midwest: annoyance over the word "love" written on the soldier's helmet.
>
> "It reminds them of hippies," Harry Treleaven said. "We've gotten several calls already from congressmen complaining. They don't think it's the sort of thing soldiers should be writing on their helmets."
>
> Len Garment ordered the picture taken out of the commercial. Gene Jones inserted another at the end; this time a soldier whose helmet was plain.
>
> This was the first big case of "political" guidance, and for a full week the more sensitive members of the Gene Jones staff mourned the loss of their picture.
>
> "It was such a beautiful touch," one of them said, "And we thought what an interesting young man it must be who would write 'Love' on his helmet even as he went into combat."
>
> Then E.S.J. Productions received a letter from the mother of the soldier. She told what a thrill it had been to see her son's picture in one of Mr. Nixon's commercials, and she asked if there were some way that she might obtain a copy of the photograph.
>
> The letter was signed: Mrs. William Love.
> (McGinniss, pp. 91-92)

Appropriateness is an attempt to balance the psychological dimensions of word choice with probable impact. Denotatively the word "love" was an appropriate designation on the soldier's helmet. It was after all his name. His name, however, was so connotatively powerful that the denotative meaning was overshadowed, questioned and lost.

Illustrative of appropriateness of word choice and the problem of meanings is the Language of Emotion by Joel R. Davitz. This author attempts, with some degree of difficulty, to operationalize the definitions of 50 key emotional terms, e.g., love, anger, confidence, fear, hope, hate, happiness, surprise, passion, etc. The study is an excellent resource to illustrate the stylistic characteristic of appropriateness and the tenet of "words don't mean, people mean."

C. Imagery/Vividness

Imagery is the use of language to enhance or heighten the senses through visualization created in the mind of the listener/observer.

Evidence:

1. A powerful tool for the persuasive public speaker is demonstrative evidence. This form of evidence largely results from the use of imagery and appeal to the human senses. Commenting on the appeal to the senses or imagery and the power of demonstrative evidence Kansas City, Missouri, lawyer Sidney L. Willens tells of an incident involving the "King of Torts" Melvin Belli.

   In one case Belli had a different challenge. He had to find a way of making "sound" visible to a jury. A 12-ton tractor-trailer smashed into a fire truck driven by Belli's seriously injured client. The truck driver insisted he was faultless because he couldn't hear the siren of the fire truck.

   Belli produced 35 witnesses who heard the siren. But the sound of the siren left no mark in the courtroom. Halfway through his closing argument to the jury Belli had to stop speaking. A screeching siren of a fire truck passed the courthouse. Belli had arranged for friendly firemen to make the run. The jury brought in a verdict of $225,000. (p. C14)

2. The next two examples illustrate the use of imagery as well as connotative and denotative meanings of language. The examples involve two speeches. Dr. Donald Olson, speech instructor for Johnny Carson and John F. Kennedy's Presidential Advisor Theodore Sorenson, demonstrates imagery through a student speech given in one of his classes at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (see Appendix A, Joleen Phillips). A brief speech by noted politician and agnostic of the 19th century Robert G. Ingersoll provides a final example of imagery in public speaking. This speech along with the previously mentioned student presentation are vivid

expressions of general semantics, or the study of words and the affect on human behavior (see Appendix B, Robert G. Ingersoll). Each presentation heightens the appeal to the senses through images created in the listener's mind.

D. Accuracy

Accuracy is a summative descriptor of style. It results from wording that is appropriate, concrete or understandable and vivid. Accuracy or a transfer of meaning is also the goal of effective communication. The objective of the general semantists is accurate thinking and communication among interactants. General semantics and style are inherently related. The summative principle of style is accuracy and accuracy of thought and expression is a critical goal of general semantics.

If any one of the factors of concreteness, appropriateness and imagery is not used properly then the transfer of meaning between interactants is also affected. The degree of accuracy of the intended message and the received message is, in part, a function of style, placing "proper words in proper places." If any one of the three principles of style is affected then the summative factor of accuracy is also affected. The mutually interdependent nature of the principles of style and the culminating relationship to general semantics is humorously illustrated by the following story, author unknown. The reader should keep in mind that accuracy is the result of optimal use of word choice as well as the basic tenets of general semantics.

> An English lady, while visiting Switzerland, was looking for a room. She asked the school master if he could recommend any. He took her to see several rooms. When everything was arranged, the lady returned to her home to make final preparations for the move. When she arrived home, she suddenly realized that she had not seen a water closet (a toilet). She immediately

wrote a note to the school master asking him if there was a "W.C." around the place. The school master was a poor master of English so he asked the parish priest if he could help out in this matter. Together they tried to discover the meaning of the letters "W.C." The only solution they could come up with was a "Wayside Chapel." The school master wrote the following letter to the lady_____.

Dear Madam:

I take great pleasure in informing you that a "W.C." is situated nine miles from your house, in the center of a beautiful grove of pine trees, surrounded by lovely grounds.

It is capable of holding twenty-two persons and is opened on Sundays and Thursdays only. As there are a great number of people expected during the summer months, I would advise you to come early. Although there is usually plenty of standing room, this is an unfortunate situation, particularly if you are in the habit of going regularly.

You will no doubt be glad to hear that a great number of people bring their lunch and make a day of it, while others who can afford to, go late and arrive just in time. I would especially advise your ladyship to go on Thursday when there is an organ accompaniment. The accoustics are excellent, and often the most delicate sounds can be heard everywhere.

It may interest you to know that my daughter was married in the "W.C." It was there she met her husband. I can remember the rush there was for seats. There were ten people to seats usually occupied by one. It was wonderful to see the expressions on their faces.

The newest attraction is the bell donated by a wealthy resident of the district. It rings every time a person enters. A bazaar is to be held to provide the plush seats for all, since the people believe it is a long felt need.

My wife is rather delicate so she could not attend regularly. It is almost a year since she last went. Naturally, it pains her very much not to be able to go more often. I shall be delighted to reserve the best seat for you if you wish, where you will be seen by all. For the children there is a special time and place so they will not disturb the elders.

Hoping to have been of service to you.

Sincerely,

(author unknown)

As the reader reflects on the example of the "W.C." the language is characterized as simple and concrete as well as vivid. The principle of appropriateness, is, however, questionable thus the culminating principle of accuracy is not achieved. The goal of communication, the principles of style, and the study of general semantics are certainly related and deserve special attention within the basic speech communication course.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The author has presented a rationale for more carefully integrating the topic of general semantics and style into the public speaking orientation of the basic speech course. The rationale focuses on (1) style as an integral component in the public speaking orientation and (2) with the constraint of available course time general semantics can effectively be integrated into a discussion of style. A modest proposal explains how to achieve integration. Illustrations drawn from a variety of interests demonstrate the integration of style and general semantics. Frederick Buechner in Wishful Thinking expresses the power and impact of our language and our word choice.

> WORD
>
> In Hebrew the term dabar means both "word" and "deed." Thus to say something is to do something. I love you, I hate you. I forgive you. I am afraid. Who knows what such words do, but whatever it is, it can never be undone. Something that lay hidden in the heart is irrevocably released through speech into time, is given substance and tossed like a stone into the pool of history, where the concentric rings lap out endlessly.
>
> Words are power, essentially the power of creation. By my words I both discover and create who I am. By my words I elicit a word from you. Through our converse we create each other.
>
> (Buechner, p. 96)

APPENDIX A

Joleen Phillips
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." This quotation from a textbook entitled Problems of Democracy, by Edmund Burke, concisely states what I feel to be a major problem in the United States . . . the attitude of indifference. This attitude of indifference, especially evident in our actions toward fellow Americans, must be overcome. We cannot ignore a situation or fail to act simply because we feel it is not our concern; it is our concern.

Examples of this attitude of indifference are constantly brought before us. These examples may be humorous, as depicted by Charles Schultz in his comic strip, "Peanuts." In reply to Charlie Brown's question, "How do you feel about what Linus is doing? Doesn't it bother you to know that he is going to spend the night in a pumpkin patch waiting for the 'Great Pumpkin'?" Sally replies, It doesn't bother me because it doesn't affect me. OOPS! What do you want me to do, GET INVOLVED?"

However, more often, too often, these examples are far from humorous. Take the case of Bucky Welch as reported by the Omaha World Herald on September 28, 1964. Bucky started the day a normal, happy, healthy little boy. He was eight years old. Bucky decided to go to the swimming pool, and as little boys and their dogs are inseparable, Smokey, the four-month-old puppy went along. As Bucky was in a hurry to get to the swimming pool, he took all the short cuts he knew; cutting through vacant lots and back alleys--until he found his way blocked by a train. Bucky waited--and waited--and still the train didn't move. As Bucky waited, his small boy impatience overcame his small boy wiseness and he crawled beneath the still cars. Then it was Smokey's turn. He got just half-way across the tracks--and sat down! The cool shadow of the train was better than any swimming pool as far as he was concerned! Bucky pleaded and coaxed and begged, but Smokey just sat. Finally Bucky reached beneath the train to get Smokey and just then the train lurched forward--severing Bucky's hands--but not before the train had dragged him eighty-six feet. Bucky ran down the alley, crying for help. Finally he saw a man, an adult, someone he could turn to for help, but he, too, didn't want to "get involved." Bucky ran up to the man with his plea for help and the man said, "Go away. Go away." What type of person could meet a plea for help with these words? The same type of person who shut the door in the face of a savagely beaten boy in Sterling, Michigan. . . .

The case of John Cummings, Jr. is reported in the North Platte Telegraph Bulletin on December 28, 1966. John was savagely beaten and robbed of sixteen cents and as he stumbled from door to door, pleading for help, he, too, found people who didn't want to "get involved." Six doors were slammed in his face, forcing him to wander in sub-zero temperature without a coat for more than twenty minutes. John's mother said she was "shocked and dismayed" at the refusal of aid. She said, "John told me he pounded on doors and called for help, but they just screamed and closed the door." "Closed the door." Shut out his plea for help, just as Rose Peiffer's plea for help was shut out.

The case of Rose Peiffer was also reported in the North Platte Telegraph Bulletin, this time on December 24, 1966. Mrs. Peiffer was forty-five years

of age, a widow living in Oklahoma City. She was shot by an attacker and she ran across her lawn and onto the porch of the house next door. The attacker followed her onto the porch and shot her again, this time killing her, while the neighbor woman stood inside, afraid to let Mrs. Peiffer in. The neighbor woman was quoted as saying "She must have screamed and pleaded three or four minutes. She tried to break the door down but we held it." Held it shut, refused to "get involved," ignored her terrified plea. And it doesn't just happen in Oklahoma--in New York City, they too are guilty of ignoring a dying woman's plea for help.

The case of Catherine Genovese, better known as "Kitty," is reported in the Saturday Evening Post on January 16, 1965. Kitty was returning home late one night from a birthday party held in honor of her twenty-fourth birthday and as she walked down the streets of New York, she was alone—or so she thought. She was unaware of the silent, watchful shadow of Winston Mosely that followed her. Just as Kitty turned onto the street where her apartment building was located, Mosely leaped from the shadows, knocking her to the sidewalk and stabbing her in the back. Kitty's screams awakened people in near-by apartment buildings and they leaned out their windows to yell at Mosely who then ran away. But he didn't run very far. He was counting on the fact that people would think he had gone away and they could go back to sleep--and that's just what they did. People returned to the quiet oblivion of sleep, and a hurt, dying woman was apparently forgotten. Kitty dragged herself to her apartment building and collapsed into the entry way, less than fifty feet from the safety of her own front door, and called up the stairs to a friend's apartment for help—and lay waiting, waiting for help that never came. Yes, Kitty was apparently forgotten--but not by everyone. Winston Mosely remembered, and he returned--first stabbing Kitty in the throat to silence her cries and then brutally slashing her an additional ten times until she lay still. Kitty was first attacked at 3:15 a.m., but it wasn't until 3:50 a.m. that one of the thirty-eight witnesses bothered to call the police. Their excuse for their failure to act? They "didn't want to get involved."

The Holy Bible asks, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I say, YES!

Sally, the comic strip character, asks, "What do you want me to do, get involved?" I say, YES!

John Donne, a 17th century writer, makes this statement in his Meditation 17. "Any man's death diminishes me as I am a part of mankind." A most appropriate and accurate statement on Mr. Donne's part.

Naturally how we act and if we act is up to us, but a decision must be make. The action we take depends on us as individuals. Will we overcome our attitude of indifference? That is the question we must ask ourselves. Will we be involved? Will we be concerned? "To be or not to be, that is the question."

APPENDIX B

Robert G. Ingersoll

AT A CHILD'S GRAVE

The following account of this speech appeared in the Chicago Tribune of January 13, 1882:

Washington, D.C., Jan. 9th--In a remote corner of the Congressional Cemetery yesterday afternoon, a small group of people with uncovered heads were arranged around a newly-opened grave. They included Detective and Mrs. George O. Miller and family and friends, who had gathered to witness the burial of the former's bright little son Harry, a recent victim of diphtheria. As the casket rested upon the trestles there was a painful pause, broken only by the mother's sobs, until the undertaker advanced toward a stout florid-complexioned gentleman in the party and whispered to him, the words being inaudible to the lookers-on.

This gentleman was Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, a friend of the Millers, who had attended the funeral at their request. He shook his head when the undertaker first addressed him, and then said suddenly, "Does Mrs. Miller desire it?"

The undertaker gave an affirmative nod. Mr. Miller looked appealingly toward the distinguished orator, and then Col. Ingersoll advanced to the side of the grave, made a motion denoting a desire for silence, and in a voice of exquisite cadence, delivered one of his characteristic eulogies for the dead. The scene was intensely dramatic. A fine drizzling rain was falling, and every head was bent, and every ear turned to catch the impassioned words of eloquence and hope that fell from the lips of the famed orator.

Col. Ingersoll was unprotected by either hat or umbrella, and his invocation thrilled his hearers with awe; each eye that had previously been bedimmed with tears brightened and sobs became hushed. The Colonel said;

> My friends: I know how vain it is to gild a grief with words, and yet I wish to take from every grave its fear. Here in this world, where life and death are equal kings, all should be brave enough to meet what all the dead have met. The future has been filled with fear, stained and polluted by the heartless past. From the wondrous tree of life the buds and blossoms fall with ripened fruit, and in the common bed of earth, patriarchs and babes sleep side by side.
>
> Why should we fear that which will come to all that is? We cannot tell, we do not know, which is the greater blessing--life or death. We cannot say that death is not good. We do not know whether the grave is the end of this life, or the door of another, or whether the night here is not somewhere else a dawn. Neither can we tell which is the more fortunate--the child dying in its mother's arms, before its lips have learned to form a word, or he who journeys all the length of life's uneven road, painfully taking the last slow steps with staff and crutch.

Every cradle asks us "Whence?" and every coffin "Whither?" The poor barbarian, weeping above his dead, can answer these questions just as well as the robed priest of the most authentic creed. The tearful ignorance of the one, is as consoling as the learned and unmeaning words of the other. No man, standing where the horizon of a life has touched a grave, has any right to prophesy a future filled with pain and tears.

May be that death gives all there is of worth to life. If those we press and strain within our arms could never die, perhaps that love would wither from the earth. May be this common fate treads from out the paths between our hearts the weeds of selfishness and hate. And I had rather live and love where death is king, than have eternal life where love is not. Another life is nought, unless we know and love again the ones who love us here.

They who stand with breaking hearts around this little grave, need have no fear. The larger and the nobler faith in all that is, and is to be, tells us that death, even at its worst, is only perfect rest. We know that through the common wants of life--the needs and duties of each hour--their grief will lessen day by day, until at last this grave will be to them a place of rest and peace--almost of joy. There is for them this consolation: The dead do not suffer. If they live again, their lives will surely be as good as ours. We have no fear. We are all children of the same mother, and the same fate awaits us all. We, too, have our religion, and it is this: Help for the living--hope for the dead.

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